DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 156 549 SO 010 543

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TITLE Political Climates and the Diffusion of Innovative Instructional Materials.
PUB DATE Nov 77
NOTE 26p.; For related documents, see SO 010 539-540, SO 010 542; Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies (Cincinnati, Ohio, November 23-26, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adoption (Ideas); *Case Studies; Communications; Curriculum Development; *Diffusion; Educational Innovation; *Evaluation Methods; Feedback; Information Dissemination; Information Needs; Information Networks; Information Sources; *Instructional Materials; Interaction Process Analysis; *Political Influences; Relationship; Secondary Education; *Social Studies; Summative Evaluation; Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS *Comparing Political Experience Project

ABSTRACT

The process by which the high school political science curriculum project "Comparing Political Experiences" (CPE) was diffused highlights the political climate created by communications among curriculum developers, diffusers, and potential practitioners. The political climate surrounding attitudes toward new instructional materials is composed of recognition of the program, ability to differentiate it from other programs or materials, acceptance, and adoption. Major questions which arise with regard to the political climate of diffusion, and which have been largely ignored in previous diffusion research, include: Which communication links are most utilized? How is information passed from developer to practitioner? How can a strategy be implemented once it has been identified? What feedback is available? The diffusion strategy for CPE consisted mainly of six regional diffusion conferences which relied heavily on local and regional social studies education networks to acquaint key decision-makers with information about the program. Other diffusion methods involved explanatory articles about CPE in professional journals and field testing in 26 pilot schools throughout the United States. Evaluation of the regional conferences indicates that they succeeded in familiarizing participants and opinion leaders with CPE, promoting discussion about CPE, and helping curriculum decision-makers plan for implementation of CPE. Recommendations for future diffusion strategies include provision for feedback from conference participants. (Author/DJ)

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POLITICAL CLIMATES AND THE DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

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Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies (Cincinnati, Ohio, November 23-26, 1977)

SO010543

The diffusion of instructional innovations is both a complex and a political process. It can be viewed as a communication process with a network which crosses levels from the community to transnational organizations. It is both vital and incomplete. Communication through the channels in the network is as much left up to chance as it is a consistent, planned message which is sent from a sender to a receiver.

One way of dealing in this vast communication network is in terms of three components. There are "senders" who are basically responsible for either developing or communicating innovative ideas, methods, and materials. Many types of actors form the category of "sender." In the case of the diffusion of instructional innovations, they are school personnel, university participants, research and development centers across the nation, and principal organizers in local, state and national associations. Corporate publishing interests are involved in the sender category, as are governmental legislators. All of these individuals attempt at one time or another to communicate important, innovative ideas, methods and materials to the schools.

The "receivers" in the process are also a diverse group. Generally, they are teachers and students in schools. Yet, for national communications they can be as diverse as State Departments of Education, school superintendents, curriculum coordinators, university personnel, as well as publishers and other government officials. Basically, however, receivers are most often considered to be teachers and students in classrooms in elementary schools and high schools across the nation.

Neither one of these two groups are coherent blocs of any type. Often, communication is not clear and consistent within these groups,

let alone between them. They are amorphous and polyglot groups which communicate only to select sections of the network.

The process is complicated considerably by the middle range of groups between senders and receivers. Innovators are not normally one and the same person as receivers of innovation. Nor can they communicate directly with receiver counterparts. Therefore, there is a key middle range group, as diverse as either the sender or receiver groups, through which the process of diffusion must proceed. The middle group is normally defined by state agencies, associations, school boards, adoption committees and other groups which narrow choices for receivers. Senders, therefore, communicate with key decision-makers in the process of diffusion who make choices about the range of concerns which receivers will consider. It is because of this narrowing in the choice process that the middle group, also not a solid bloc, is so important in the diffusion process.

There has been important research done regarding the characteristics of senders, receivers and the middle groups. There has been less research on the political climate which is created by the communication channels and the diffusion of products themselves. Actors in the political climate include all of these groups. Innovators can not press innovation on the receivers if the political climate in schools is conservative. Nor can teachers wishing to implement new programs do so without some outside stimulus and reinforcement in their environment. Therefore, the general climate characterized by social forces, school problem solving and the centrality of the receiver in the communication network is clearly one of the most important variables in the diffusion

process.

There are some significant problems in attempting to focus on the political climate involved in the diffusion of instructional innovations. One of the main problems is that the communication links are not formalized. There is no assurance that an innovator in a curriculum center, for example, who talks with key decision-makers about ideas, will have those ideas transmitted to teachers in schools. Each group has a coterie of individuals with whom they talk regularly, and information about innovations spreads through these individuals. But, there is no assurance that any communication will reach its intended target, because the channels are very amorphous and the links are often absent. Testimony to this fact is given by the diffusion of the new social studies materials where many receivers have not, ten years after the innovation, heard of many of the products that were produced during this period. Even the initial process of defining the political climate without some well-developed system of communication is a difficult task.

There are also problems with the transmission of information. As it passes from individual to individual, information can be changed and altered in the way that a typical game where individuals pass information from one to another turns out with a very different message at the end than it had at the beginning. This problem, in a much larger scale and more serious proportions exists in diffusion. It confounds the determination of the major variables involved in determining political climate and in assessing its impact.

There is also a problem of feedback. There is very little solid data about the characteristics of receivers, and these characteristics

change. The process is a dynamic one. Both senders and receivers are undergoing continuous change. However, because of the process, and the changes that are occurring, it is very difficult for a sender to receive feedback and evaluation on the impact of the information they send.

All of these problems are part of the political climate of diffusion. Which links are most utilized, how information is passed, and what feedback is available depends directly on the political climate in which the network of communication is established. This political climate is also dynamic and changing, by a myriad of internal and external forces. Therefore, if we think of diffusion in terms of these characteristics and processes, the question becomes a thorny one, filled with a great many questions, all of which are both intriguing and significant.

Three essential questions will be addressed here. First, we have puzzled over the question of what makes a difference in diffusion, if its senders have scarce resources to expend in the diffusion process. What target groups are the most useful in promoting innovation? What kinds of communication are most effective? This central question of what makes a difference, is one that plagues any innovator, but especially curriculum innovators who have as a goal that their innovation will be used widely in schools.

A second question arises out of the first. Once the decision is made about what makes a difference, a major question arises about how to implement the strategy which is identified. Once, for example, key curriculum decision-makers are identified as important links in the dif-

fusion process, how can information reach them, and what is the best way to acquaint key decision-makers with the innovation and cooperate with them in its implementation?

Finally, once a strategy is implemented, another difficult and knotty question arises as to how to determine the impact that has been made on the target groups. Little evaluation has been done on the impact of diffusion efforts by curriculum innovators. There are few guidelines about appropriate questions, let alone appropriate measures which can determine impact. Certainly the use of the product is an important indicator, yet the impact of the ideas themselves and the stimulus that is provided for new thinking is equally important. Standard evaluations will not be comprehensive enough in order to determine the impact, therefore, the innovator is left with a myriad of very fussy impressions about the diffusion process.

These three questions form the core of our inquiry about the diffusion process for a particular product, Comparing Political Experiences. The course is the result of five years of work on an NSF-sponsored High School Political Science Curriculum Project. The process of diffusion began when the project started, but as the product began to emerge, these questions about the diffusion of innovation became central. The questions will be explored here using a case study of the attempts of one group of innovators to wrestle with the problem of diffusion.

What Makes A Difference?

Choices about what makes a difference depend a great deal upon the innovators, the innovation, and perceptions about what groups need to be reached. As our diffusion effort was a part of a curriculum development project which had diffusion as its base since its beginning,

certain avenues had already been covered. Information had been presented at major conventions, pilot teachers had tested the curriculum materials, consultants to the project had made major contributions in their areas across the United States in getting the word out about the program. It was clear to us that we had senders who were spreading information about the innovation and receivers who had used the product. We determined that we needed to focus on the middle groups and to reach this audience with as concentrated an effort as possible. We determined that the middle level was most influenced by the political climate that was involved and we needed to try to make an impact on that climate with the diffusion effort.

We began with a definition of political climate which consisted of at least three different dimensions. First, there was a need for recognition. The product needed to be recognized as an innovation by middle-level decision-makers in order for the word to spread about the program. They needed to "know" about the program before any diffusion would progress.

In addition to recognition, however, the innovation needed to be accepted. People needed not only to recognize its existence, but to understand it and to support it in their activities. Certainly, middle level decision-makers would not accept the product at face value. Some would choose to reject it because of its characteristics, yet we needed to cultivate the climate of acceptance in order for the maximum number of individuals who were interested in the product to have the opportunity to know it well enough that it would have the possibility of being accepted.

Adoption was the final part of the political climate that we recognized. A product which is recognized and accepted also needs to be adopted by schools. This depends on a great many variables, including the efforts of publishers, the price, and the market, the characteristics of the materials, and, most of all, the actual political decision-making process of choosing a product.

We therefore decided to focus on key decision-makers and to cultivate a political climate where there would be recognition, acceptance, and adoption. We determined that there was a need to come into face-to-face conversation with these key decision-makers in ways that were most efficient and relatively inexpensive. Therefore, we determined that holding a series of regional conferences with key decision-makers across the United States was one way to foster a political climate which would include both recognition, acceptance, and adoption as a basis for the diffusion of innovative curriculum materials.

A grant was therefore solicited for holding six regional diffusion conferences. The Comparing Political Experiences Diffusion Project received National Science Foundation support from March 1, 1975, to January 31, 1977. The project sponsored a series of six, regional conferences from the fall of 1975 to the fall of 1976. Each conference aimed to acquaint participants with a new high school course in civics and government titled Comparing Political Experiences (CPE).[1] During each three-day institute, the conference staff engaged the participants in work with the instructional material from the program. The conferences served six general objectives.

1. To familiarize participants with Comparing Political Experiences, so that they can describe its essential characteristics and distinguish it from other government programs;

2. To promote discussion among university participants about the implications of the materials for pre- and in-service teacher-training programs;

3. To inform opinion leaders of the conceptualization, development, and evaluation of the program;

4. To aid curriculum decision-makers to make plans for the implementation of Comparing Political Experiences as a replacement for existing government programs;

5. To gain advice from the participants about ways to further improve the product in order to insure the possibility of wide scale adoption;

6. To promote discussion among participants about how they might continue diffusion activities through workshops and institutes which they conduct.

The conferences were designed to provide a forum for a dialogue about CPE among important educational decision-makers. As pointed out above, the introduction of a new course in American government requires that people in a position to affect the adoption of the course become familiar with it well before its publication. Therefore, the conferences began during the 1975-76 school year, even though the course would not be made available until the 1978-79 school year. The time from the beginning of the conferences until the publication of the course was used to familiarize people throughout the country with the new approach to American government contained in the course.

The conferences did not represent the only diffusion activity engaged in by CPE staff. Since the inception of the High School Political Science Curriculum Project in March of 1972, the staff has written articles that have appeared in a variety of professional

journals. Also, they have made frequent presentations to various kinds of institutes, conferences, and workshops. Furthermore, the project established a network of twenty-six pilot schools throughout various regions of the country. Though individual schools changed from time to time, the pilot school network served as the field-test base of the course. Course materials went through three cycles of field testing.

To advise the project staff and the pilot schools, a network of twenty-six consultants was established. In order to supplement these activities, to reach beyond the network established by the High School Political Science Curriculum Project, and to contact and assemble educators who could influence the adoption of new materials, the CPE diffusion project was proposed. The conferences were well-suited to acquainting educators with the special nature of the Comparing Political Experiences program.

CPE represents a unique alternative to currently available civics and government courses. It features three dimensions--knowledge, intellectual skills, and participation experiences. Acquainting educators with new course content and pedagogical techniques represented one major implementation task faced by the Project. Other curriculum development efforts had faced the same task and had been served well by three-day conferences for leadership specialists.[2]

However, the third dimension of the CPE program, participation experiences, underscored the need for implementation activity. By systematically attempting to teach students a set of participation skills, CPE stands more distinctly as an alternative to most other

civics and government programs. The instructional materials do not confine students to work at their desks day after day. Rather, CPE urges students to apply newly-learned participation skills both in the classroom as well as outside the classroom, in groups in their school and in their community.

Therefore, initial decisions were based on the idea that a significant difference could be made by holding conferences for key decision-makers which would acquaint them with the material. It would give them the opportunity to recognize the essential features of the program, to accept the program on its own merits, and to aid in the adoption of the program in their areas.

How Can a Strategy Be Implemented?

The idea of the conferences appeared to be a sound one. The implementation of them could have taken a variety of forms. Basically, the conferences featured intensive interaction between the innovators, local hosts who were already very familiar with the product, and the participants. The strategy will be described below.

Conference participants included decision-makers within schools, such as social studies department chairpersons, high school principals, curriculum supervisors, and assistant superintendents with curriculum responsibilities; state department of education personnel and education opinion leaders; and university faculty, such as social studies educators and political scientists, who train social studies teachers. Table I on the following page shows the types of participants who attended each of the six conferences sponsored by the

Table I:

Distribution of Participants by Category and Percentage

	Newark	Columbus	San Antonio	San Francisco	Boulder	Airlie
Classroom Teachers	30	24	35	21	46	16
Principals	3	-	3	4	-	-
Social Studies Department Supervisors	13	12	9	23	5	5
Curriculum Coordinators	10	14	6	15	11	11
Political Scientists	21	17	19	11	5	14
Social Studies Educators	5	26	16	26	31	35
State Social Studies Supervisors	8	2	3	-	-	14
Assistant Superintendents for Instruction	5	-	-	-	2	-
Other	5	5	9	-	-	5

Comparing Political Experiences Diffusion Project. Table II suggests that the most effective method for reaching conference participants was the brochure/application sent either directly to eventual participants, to school principals who then contacted potential participants, or sent to colleagues of potential participants. The only exception to the rule was the Airlie conference. Because the Airlie conference drew from a nationwide base, it was difficult to properly target the pre-conference mailing. Therefore, the Project enlisted the aid of staff members of the Social Studies Development Center in making personal invitations to some people.

In preparation for a conference, the staff contacted relevant members of state social studies councils, state departments of public instruction, regional political science associations, as well as other organizations which work with leadership specialists in the schools. Working through these regional organizations helped establish needed legitimacy for the Project. Where these groups were involved most directly, the number of conference applicants rose.

For example, in addition to the usual channels of communication utilized to attract participants to the conference, two other groups helped in identifying possible conferees in California. These groups were the California Teachers Association and the Association of California School Administrators. The ACSA was particularly useful as it identified a listing of a large number of curriculum coordinators working throughout the state of California. This group is customarily difficult to reach, as their names cannot normally be obtained from a single source.

Table II:

How Conference Participants were Reached -- by Percentage

	Newark	Columbus	San Antonio	San Francisco	Boulder	Airlie
Brochure/Application	26	53	24	50	37	24
Suggested by Principal	24	24	12	6	18	5
Suggested by Colleague	18	12	25	16	20	13
Suggested by Social Studies Development Center	16	2	-	4	8	21
Was Directly Invited	5	-	-	2	3	26
Saw Application in DEA News*	-	2	12	8	3	3
Suggested by Host	-	-	18	2	3	-
Other	11	7	9	12	8	8

*Division of Educational Affairs News (DEA News) is a newsletter published by the American Political Science Association. The Summer, 1975, issue carried an application to the diffusion conferences.

The Boulder conference, hosted and planned by the Social Science Education Consortium, also experienced a large number of applications. This was mainly due to the activities of the SSEC in the region and the extensive contacts it has developed over the years.

Most conference participants viewed themselves as change agents in the dissemination of social studies curriculum materials. During the last five years many of them had been involved in the implementation of at least one of the following programs: American Political Behavior; Comparative Political Systems; Justice in Urban America; Man: A Course of Study; The Analysis of Public Issues Program; The High School Geography Project; and Sociological Resources for the Social Studies.

By bringing these types of people together in one place, an attempt was made to acquaint them with the course and to suggest ways in which they could become active in dissemination activities on behalf of CPE. An attempt was made to locate the conferences in geographic reagions spread across the country, so that information about CPE could be distributed as broadly as possible.[3]

At each conference site, the staff of the CPE Diffusion Project worked closely with a local host. One person was identified to help organize a list of conference participants and prepare for conference activities in each local area. The nation of having a local host proved extremely important. Course developers from Indiana University could have been viewed with some skepticism by local participants who were not familiar with them. By working with an individual from the local area who helped organize the conference, a great deal of

credibility was achieved which otherwise would have taken valuable conference time to build up.[4]

During the conferences themselves, there were three days of intensive activity. First informal sessions were held where people got to know each other, which was as important a criterion for group formation as what was actually said about the product. In this way, participants got to share ideas about what they were doing and a climate was created for accepting an innovation, as people demonstrated which innovations they were dealing with and how.

We then held formal presentations and informal conversations over every aspect of the course, including the conceptual framework, the basic information which was taught in the course, the skills that were taught, and the participation components. These sessions were intensive, beginning with an overview of the course materials and continuing into a discussion by participants about how the materials might be improved, and how they might be reacted to by members of various local constituencies.

The conference then broke into small groups to discuss implementation questions in terms of teacher training and various adoption strategies. In these groups, people interacted specifically about how the course could be adopted in various areas and what problems and opportunities there were for such adoptions. Finally, the group was asked to evaluate the conference so that we might gain important information about their ideas and experiences.

The overall strategy was an "enveloping" one. We began with people whom we knew across the nation and used local contacts as a

base for contacting new people. New contacts were, in effect, enveloped into the old network, and intensive sessions were promoted in order for people to completely scrutinize the product, give their ideas, and think in expansive ways about the problems of adoption. Through this process, all three key political variables--recognition, acceptance, and adoption--were promoted.[5]

How Can an Assessment of the Impact of the Strategy be Conducted?

The ultimate impact of the conferences can be measured in several ways. First, through the use of two evaluation instruments, an attempt was made to measure the extent to which the conferences achieved their major objectives. The first objective concerned familiarizing conference participants with CPE so that they can describe its essential characteristics and distinguish it from other government programs. All available data indicate that the project did achieve its first objective. On an evaluation instrument, conference participants were asked to identify specific substantive aspects of the CPE program. At all six conferences, participants responded successfully to these items.

The second objective stated a desire to promote a discussion among university participants about the implications of the materials for pre- and in-service teaching-training programs. One session at each of the conferences was devoted to group discussions on this topic. In these discussions the staff raised specific questions about factors affecting the implementation of CPE. The discussions yielded a high amount of interaction among conference participants as well as a

great deal of useful information about the need or lack of need for a specific teacher-training program to go with the CPE materials.

The third purpose of the project was to inform opinion leaders of the new program. By referring again to Table I, it is easy to judge the extent to which this objective was achieved. Several conference participants occupy positions including state legislators, editors of state social studies journals, and board of education officials. Others occupied positions such as consultants to state departments of public instruction, curriculum coordinators, and social studies educators. The participant rosters point out that for the most part opinion leaders were present in large number at the conferences.

Group discussions also helped to achieve the fourth objective of aiding curriculum decision-makers to make plans for the implementation of Comparing Political Experiences as a replacement for existing government programs. These discussions usually focused upon the identification of important gatekeepers in regions where the conferences were held. For example, the participants of the Delaware conference described the roles taken by various state departments of education in the northeast region. In California, the discussion centered on the role of the county social studies offices and also on the effect of the state's social studies guidelines. In Texas, a great deal of time was spent outlining responsibilities of the Texas Education Agency and the Education Service Centers throughout the state. As a result of all the conferences, the Project learned about important personnel and procedures influential in the adoption of new curriculum materials.

The fifth and sixth objectives included gaining advice from participants about ways to improve CPE to insure the possibility of wide scale adoption and promoting discussion about how participants might continue diffusion activities. These objectives were perhaps most closely related to the issue of ultimate adoption than the four previous objectives. For example, an earnest attempt was made to gather advice from participants about ways to tailor CPE so as to insure that it fell within specified state guidelines and at the same time contained nothing of an offensive nature to people living in the region where the conference was held. The staff gained numerous suggestions regarding this objective, most of which were directly implemented into a subsequent revision of the instructional materials.

Most participants said they would participate in activities such as presentations, but few participants would take part in more extensive activities such as urging the adoption of CPE. This indicates that most conferees were well-informed and favorably disposed toward CPE, but that urging adoption would have to await their view of the publication version of the course. The staff did not contact each participant in order to ascertain what kinds of activities were engaged in after the conferences took place.

Of all conference participants, college and university social studies educators ranked highest in likelihood to undertake future dissemination activities. For example, more than half of this group at the Columbus, Ohio conference stated thay would give a presentation on CPE either to a general audience or to their methods classes.

It will always be diffucult to ascertain the specific impact these conferences had. This is true not only because no follow up instrument was mailed to participants to measure their participation in follow-up activities, but also because the CPE Diffusion Project was only one of the several diffusion efforts in diffusion made by the developers. Unquestionably however, the workshops provided an atmosphere in which participants could come together and give their full attention to learning about a new instructional product.

There is no doubt that these conferences helped promote the recognition of Comparing Political Experiences. Even though only fifty people attended every conference, a minimum of three hundred invitations were mailed directly to school principals, social studies educators, political scientists, high school teachers, curriculum coordinators, and personnel employed by state departments of education. The purpose of these mailings was not only to solicit participation at the individual conferences, but also to remind people of the appearance of a new government program--one which was quite different from most others.

To a lesser extent, the conferences were successful in helping to create a climate of acceptability prior to the publication of the new course. Of the total number of participants at each conference, certainly not all were enchanted by the particular approach outlined in the Comparing Political Experiences program. However, the majority of the participants attended because they were interested in learning about a new and different program. It was this majority group that usually became enthusiastic about the course and left the conference with an

intent to become involved in additional dissemination activities.

Project staff described the course completely, shared sample instructional materials with conference participants, and invited their advice about how to revise individual components of the course, but also felt as though they were making a significant contribution to the ultimate shape the course would take. These people often grew to have a real stake in the course.

It is safe to assume, therefore, that the conferences did contribute to the climate of acceptability necessary prior to the publication of an innovative course in American government. As mentioned above, it is difficult to tell precisely what effect the conferences had by themselves. For example, they may have had a less pronounced effect if the many articles and hundreds of presentations made by project staff had not preceded them. By the same token, these earlier efforts may have been short-lived if the conferences had not provided a forum for people to come together and share their views about the course in-depth.

To the extent that the conferences affected initial recognition of the course and helped to create a climate of acceptability, they surely did not hurt the course's chances for adoption in various areas. It should be kept in mind, however, that the purpose of the conferences was not to have a direct effect on the adoption of the course. In fact, no state or local adoptions were ever even discussed at length by any of the conference participants. Rather, the conferences were based on an assumption that up to the point of publication course developers can help foster and maintain an atmosphere which is largely open to the consideration of the ideas in their program.

Conference staff felt that the ultimate responsibility for adoption should be the domain of the publisher with active participation by course developers. In this specific case, that includes the development team of American Government: Comparing Political Experiences as well as the marketing and sales staff of Prentice-Hall, Inc. Put in their proper perspective, the conferences were one of many mechanisms utilized to keep the ideas of the course in the public eye during the seven year duration from course conceptualization to final publication.

Conclusion

These are some of the responses that we developed to the basic questions of diffusion we faced with the Comparing Political Experiences program. We found that it was important to pick a group out of the maze of groups in the network possible for diffusion purposes. Which group is reasonable depends a great deal on the fabric of the comprehensive diffusion strategy used by the initial curriculum project and the timing of the new diffusion project. At a time late in the project, when materials are developed and yet can be revised, key decision-makers are excellent people to provide for suggestions for revisions and adoption strategies. The interaction with decision-makers in the field regarding the shape of the program was important feedback for the publication version of the program. Its chances for adoption based on these comments are far greater than would have existed without the conferences.

The strategy for enveloping old and new contacts in the conferences was also important. Without the local hosts and the ready-made regional

networks, the conferences would not have had the success which they had. Strategy will vary according to group and potential market, but for an American government course, and a project which developed materials, this strategy of meshing together old and new contacts was an effective one.

Questions of impact still plague us. We would highly recommend that follow-up activities after a conference be designed so that diffusion could be reinforced and further evaluations could be done. We have, however, had some beginnings of feedback from the conferences as we hear about people who want to adopt the project and engage in other activities. Certainly, the conferences raised the visibility of the program in peoples minds, and their willingness to consider it for adoption was much enhanced. Also, the general educational change process was aided as people met with each other and planned new activities together based on the opportunity to interact at a conference.

The three questions we have raised are far from answered by our efforts to carry out the conferences. There are many alternatives for diffusion which remain unexplored. We do not know, for example, whether a different diffusion strategy would have resulted in a greater impact. There is a need for some general research strategies that would apply the same instruments to a variety of diffusion efforts so that comparative data could be gained. We do know one thing based on our experience. It is important to include the decision-makers who structure choices about an innovative product as much as possible and as soon as possible in the planning and development of any instructional innovation. Their ideas can and should shape the innovation

toward a more useful and usable instructional product.

Footnotes

1. Comparing Political Experiences is the main instructional product of the High School Political Science Curriculum Project. In March, 1972, the American Political Science Association announced the establishment of the High School Political Science Curriculum Project. The project, based at the Social Studies Development Center, Indiana University, Bloomington, developed, tested, and is diffusing an alternative approach to high school courses in civics and government. The new course will be published by Prentice-Hall, Inc., with a January 1979 copyright under the title American Government: Comparing Political Experiences.

2. In 1969-70, a series of six three-day regional institutes, nearly identical to the kind sponsored by the CPE Diffusion Project, was held throughout the United States to make leadership specialists aware of a new high school civics program entitled American Political Behavior. The institutes were designed to promote awareness of APB, to make legitimate the APB approach among educators and political scientists, to attract interest in the project, and to encourage further diffusion of APB by enlisting the support of the institute participants. An evaluation of the institute program by Professor Russell Farnen indicated that the conferences were popular with participants and successful in achieving their goals. The success APB subsequently achieved in the schools may be attributed in part to the conferences.

3. The conference dates and locations were as follows:
September 28-30, 1975: University of Delaware Continuing Education Center--Newark, Delaware;
October 26-28, 1975: Stouffer's University Inn--Columbus, Ohio;
November 2-4, 1975: Sheraton San Antonio Motor Inn--San Antonio, Texas;
February 29-March 2, 1976: Financial District Holiday Inn--San Francisco, California;
April 11-13, 1976: Social Science Education Consortium--Boulder, Colorado;
October 31-November 2, 1976: Airlie House--Airlie, Virginia.

4. The local hosts for the six diffusion projects include the following:
Delaware, Professor William Pulliam;
Ohio, Ms. Judy Kies;
Texas, Professor Harold Barger;
California, Professor Morris Lewenstein;
Colorado, Ms. Karen Wiley.

5. A detailed discussion of each individual conference appears in the final report of the Comparing Political Experiences Diffusion Project, National Science Foundation number PES-75-01744.